Departures

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Poetry
Open Drain

After the storm, the
gutters slough off,
an inside-out river
down the slope of a hill.
It’s a child’s ear
the open drain,
claiming rain’s pluckings
as white coins, collects
whatever it can of our life it does
by nerve endings of skew-light
and chime. Brush-like, lost hair
swirls thru water as if reclaiming
a memory.

I watch the birds brought to migrate
by a warmth that pulls them away.
Where they appear
I go next when a certain note is struck.
Asymptote

I awake to
the same familiar night.
   His hand
an impatient shimmer in
the tar-dark, feeling
for the hips of her plumb body under-
neath him, filled in by a wind
the size of an ocean.
   His thigh
a huge bank of cloud
aching toward her navel,
seeking her entirety,
    seeking her gravitational embrace.
Out the window, I watch
these two figures hung in
   slow balance,
    squint-distant curves leaning
but locked ajar,
defeated by one line of color.
The difference    cuticle-thin,
sky and stone earth pried open
    and emptying out.

Love’s days all end in this kind of quiet.
I step gently along the
   walls of the motel
and the suture-stitch vines wrestling
   upward from the dirt inspect the bed
of shrubs and weed-flowers,
tilted up, growing here
in the silence and the dark.
Coming to this

In the evening,

night’s coolness
begins to stretch thin over
the house. A second skin,
now familiar.

It is spring. A fecund
odor filling the room.

A low roof set in space,
as if expectant of the month’s
approaching growth
above and around it.

Inside,
the pale interior of
a wound, rubbed clean
underneath
a bowed ceiling, we sit.

Surgical darkness,
nothing about in the room,
but what you have left
sleeping as your tired body.
Repeats the sounds of the day,
what is gone and
what is coming.